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WAIS Inc

Wide Area Information Servers

CORPORATE BACKGROUNDER

WHAT IS WAIS INC.?

WAIS (Wide Area Information Servers), Inc. develops and markets the WAISserver™, a software system for publishing information over wide area networks such as the Internet. WAIS Inc. also creates custom online services for content providers which use WAISserver as the core technology. A pioneer in electronic publishing, WAIS Inc. is applying Internet-based technologies (e.g. WAIS, Gopher, Mosaic, etc.) to provide services for its customers such as CMP Publications, Dow Jones, Novell, and Encyclopedia Britannica.

WAIS BACKGROUND

The WAIS technology was developed in 1989 by a consortium of Thinking Machines Corporation, Apple Computer, Dow Jones, and KPMG Peat Marwick. Brewster Kahle, the President of WAIS, headed up the consortium while he was at Thinking Machines Corporation. WAIS is an open system based on international standards and a client-server architecture. WAIS is distributed free over the Internet, and shares a large international user base. The WAISserver product was developed for large scale online publishing, and extends the features and functionality of the original WAIS.

COMPANY PROFILE

WAIS Inc. was founded by Brewster Kahle. It is a privately held corporation based in San Francisco, California. WAIS Inc. has more than 30 employees, and has been profitable each quarter since it was founded. The WAIS Inc. URL is <http://www.wais.com>.

COMPANY MISSION

WAIS Inc. has three major goals: developing the Internet as a viable means for distributing information electronically; improving the nature and quality of information available over networks; and offering better methods to access that information.

MARKETS

WAIS Inc.'s four primary markets are: publishing companies, corporations, government agencies and libraries.

Publishers

Publishers have sophisticated organizations for creating and packaging content, selling advertising, and tracking customers. Unfortunately, traditional media limits the amount of information that can be published. WAIS Inc.'s WAISserver allows publishers to offer a broader range of information to a greater number of audiences. Recent WAISserver customers include CMP Publications' TechWeb™, which gives a single point of access to 17 different publications targeted to the consumer and business marketplaces. Other publishers include Dow Jones and Scholastic, Inc.

Government

The federal government is aggressively pursuing means for effective inter-agency coordination and public dissemination. Acceptance of the WAISserver system is spreading rapidly through government agencies. WAISserver is currently used by several federal agencies, including the Environmental Protection Agency, four branches of the U.S. armed forces, NASA, and the U.S. Geological Survey.

Libraries

Libraries, the traditional storehouses of knowledge, are notoriously difficult to navigate. WAIS Inc. is working with leading institutions like the Library of Congress and Rice University to provide full-text searching of their vast collections.

Corporations

Today, corporations are using networks and information servers, rather than middle management, to help executives find important resources and keep in touch with changing market conditions. WAIS Inc.'s first customer was Perot Systems, who used WAISserver on an enterprise LAN to supervise campaign operations. They are now working with many major corporations, such as Novell, Sun, and Fujitsu.

MANAGEMENT

Brewster Kahle, President

Brewster Kahle founded Wide Area Information Servers, Inc. in July 1992. He serves as president and chief technical officer and oversees all technical and consulting projects. Kahle started the Wide Area Information Servers project in 1989 by bringing together Apple Computer, Dow Jones, Thinking Machines, and KPMG Peat Marwick to create an electronic publishing system prototype. Kahle led the WAIS Internet experiment starting in 1991 to extend the technology to a large WAN environment, getting other parties involved. Brewster Kahle helped start Thinking Machines Corporation in 1983. He designed the chip and processor boards for the Connection Machine Model 1, and was the architect of the CPU of the Connection Machine Model 2 in 1986.

Bruce Gilliat, VP of Sales and Marketing

Bruce Gilliat joined the WAIS Inc. team in April of 1994 as the Vice President of Sales & Marketing. Bruce brings to WAIS a strong background in internetworking, systems design and distribution. Bruce spent over five years in sales and marketing at AT&T, and most recently was the Vice President of Sales & Marketing at Fibronics International, Inc., a fiber optic internetworking manufacturer.

John Duhring, VP of Business Development

John Duhring entered the book publishing business when books about computers were taking off. Responsible for acquiring manuscripts for Prentice-Hall, he learned about micro-computers and their potential use in publishing directly from authors, visionaries, and educators. After pioneering the development of "electronic manuscripts" and book/software packages in New York, he was asked by Apple Computer to become their "publishing evangelist," encouraging publishers to use new desktop methods for creating traditional, paper-based products. Eager to put the new tools to use and to exercise his publishing skills, John helped launch several ventures including Singular Software.